

the powerful effects in suggestion which dramatic action exerts. Many myths presented acts such as later mores could not tolerate. Allowance had to be made for the representations, as we now make allowances for Bible stories and Shakespeare. We know that the mysteries were often in bad repute for their indecency and realism, even in an age of low standards. Anybody who is not in the convention can scoff at it, however low his own code may be. The Greeks described the Phrygian mysteries as abominable and immoral, while they praised and admired the Eleusinian. "The former were introduced by slaves and foreigners, and participated in by the superstitious and ignorant. They were celebrated for money by strolling priests, and any one who paid a fee was initiated without preparation, except some ritual acts. There was no solemnity in the surroundings, and no dignity in the ceremonial, but all was vulgar and sordid."¹ The Athenian drama, in the fifth century B.C., went through an amazing development and reached high perfection. The art of the theater was especially cultivated. As to the effect of the dramas on the character of the spectators, it is to be noticed that they were presented only once in the year, at the greater festival of Dionysus in the spring, and that then a large number of plays were represented. The spectators, at Athens, were a very mixed assemblage and included the populace, "who remained in spite of any beautiful verses which they might chance to hear." They cared only to be amused, "just like modern audiences."²

619. Dramatic taste and usage in worship. Customs derived from the mysteries. About the time of Christ, by syncretism

all the religions took on a dramatic form in their ritual, with liturgies and responses, on account of the attractiveness of that form for worshipers. The Christian year was built up as a drama of the life of Christ. The ceremony of the mass was produced by an application of modes of worship which, so far as we can learn, were devised and used in the mysteries. " There is unmistakable evidence that a marriage ceremony of a religious nature existed, and that this ceremony stood in close relation to

¹ Ramsay, *Relig. of Greece and Asia Minor* > Hastings's Diet., Addit. vol., 120.

² Beloch, *Griech. Gesch.* I, 579, 592.